

AN ACT
 FOR THE
 SETTLING
 OF THE
 POSTAGE
 OF
 ENGLAND,
 SCOTLAND and IRELAND.

At the Parliament begun at *Westminster* the 17th Day
 of September, *Anno Domini* 1656.



LONDON:

Printed by *Henry Hills* and *John Field*, Printers to
 His Highness the Lord Protector. 1657.

FOAM

UNIT 3

30342


544345

Q. Now, did you see the man who was shot?



(1)

AN ACT
FOR THE
SETTLING
OF THE
POSTAGE
OF
ENGLAND,
SCOTLAND and IRELAND.

 Whereas it hath been found by experience, That the Erecting and Settling of one General Post-Office, for the speedy Conveying, Carrying, and Re-carrying of Letters by Post, to, and from all Places within England, Scotland, and Ireland, and into several parts beyond the Seas, hath been, and is the best means, not onely to maintain a certain and constant Intercourse of Trade and Commerce betwixt all the said Places, to the great benefit of the People of these Nations, but also to Convey the Publique Dispatches, and to discover and prevent many dangerous and wicked Designs, which have been, and are daily contrived against the Peace and Welfare of this Commonwealth,

A 2 Wealth,

wealth, the Intelligence whereof cannot well be Communicated, but by Letter or Escrip.

Be it Enacted by His Highness the Lord Protector and the Parliament, And it is Enacted and Ordained by Authority thereof, That from henceforth there be one General Office, to be called, and known by the name of the Post-Office of England. And one Officer from time to time to be nominated and appointed by His Highness the Lord Protector, and His Successours; and to be constituted by Letters Patents under the Great Seal of England, under the Name and Stile of Post-master General of England, and Comptroller of the Post-Office; which said Officer, and his Deputies by him therunto sufficiently Authorized, and no other, shall have the Receiving, Taking up, Ordering, Sending forward, and Delivering of all Letters and Pacquets, which shall from time to time come and go to and from all Parts and Places of England, Scotland and Ireland, where he shall settle Posts; and from all the said Parts and Places of England, Scotland and Ireland, unto any the Parts and Places beyond the Seas, (excepting such Letters as shall be sent by common known Carriers, and by them Conveyed along with their Carts, Waggones, and Pack-horses; and Letters of Advice of Merchants, which shall be sent by Masters of any Ship, Barque, or other Vessel of Merchandise, or any of their Company or Passengers therein, immediately from any Port-town of England, Scotland and Ireland; by them to be Conveyed along with such Ship, Barque, or other Vessel to any other Port-town within any of the same, or into the Parts beyond the Seas,

Seas, or from the Parts beyond the Seas to any Port-town of England, Scotland and Ireland, or members thereof, and no further.

And excepting a Letter or more sent by a Messenger on purpose for his or their own Affairs, who is, or are the Sender or Senders thereof, or by any Friend to any Place or Places within the said Nations of England, Scotland or Ireland. And also that the said Post-master-General of England, and Comptroller of the Post-Office, and his said Deputies onely, and no other shall have the Hozling of all through-Posts, and persons Riding in Post by Commission or Without, to and from all Places, upon any of the Post-Roads within England, Scotland and Ireland.

And be it further Ordained by Authority
aforesaid, That the said Officer, by himself, or
his Deputy or Deputies, by him thereunto suf-
ficiently Authorized, shall, or may Demand,
Have, Receive, and take for the Portage and
Conveyance of all or any Letters, which he
shall so Convey, Carry, and Recarry as afore-
said, or for the Hozling of any Thozow-Post,
or person Riding in Post as aforesaid, the seve-
ral Rates of Portage hereafter mentioned, and
no other, viz. For every Letter to or from any
Place within Fourscore Miles distance from
London, if a single Letter, two Pence, and if a
double Letter, four Pence, and so proportion-
ably for every Pacquet of Letters, and for
every Pacquet of a greater Bulk, Eight pence
the Dunce; And for every Letter at a farther
distance then fourscore Miles, if a single Let-
ter, Three pence, and if a double Letter, Six
pence, and so proportionably; And for every
Pacquet

Parquet of a greater Bulk, One Shilling the
 Duncce: And for every Letter to or from Scot-
 land, if a single Letter, Four pence, if a double
 Letter, Eight pence, and so proportionably;
 and if a Parquet of a greater Bulk, One Shil-
 ling six pence the Duncce: And to or from Ire-
 land, for every single Letter, Six pence, for eve-
 ry double Letter, One Shilling, and so propor-
 tionably, and for every Parquet of greater
 Bulk, Two Shillings the Duncce: And for such
 Letters or Parquets as shall be Conveyed or
 Carried within Ireland, the Rates thereof to be
 as followeth, viz. For every Letter to or from
 any Place within forty Miles distance from
 Dublin, if a single Letter, Two pence, if a
 double Letter, Four pence, and so proportion-
 ably, and if a Parquet of greater Bulk, Eight
 pence the Duncce: And for every Letter at a
 farther distance then forty Miles, if a single
 Letter, Four pence, if a double Letter, Eight
 pence, and so proportionably, and if a Parquet
 of greater Bulk, One Shilling the Duncce. For
 every Letter that shall be directed to Legorne,
 Genoa, Florence, Lyons, Marseilles, Smyrna, Aleppo,
 and Constantinople, One Shilling the single Let-
 ter, Two Shillings the double Letter, and
 Three Shillings Nine pence the Duncce Weight:
 For every Letter to Bourdeaux, Rochel, Nantes,
 Byonne, Cadize and Madrid, Nine pence the single
 Letter, One Shilling six pence the double, and
 Two Shillings the Duncce Weight: For every
 Letter to Saint Mallo, Morlaix, and Newhaven,
 Six pence the single Letter, One Shilling the
 double, and One Shilling six pence the Duncce
 Weight: For every Letter to Hambrough, Frank-
 fort, and Colloyne, Eight pence the single Letter,
 One

One Shilling four pence the double, and Two Shillings the Double Weight: And for every Letter to Danzicke, Lipswich, Lubecke, Stockholm, Copenhagen, Elsnore, and Queenesbrough, Twelve pence the single Letter, Two Shillings the double, and Four Shillings the Double Weight: And of every through Post, or Persons Riding in Post as aforesaid, Two pence half penny the Mile for each horse, besides the Guide Groat for every Stage.

And whereas upon the Arrivall of Ships from parts beyond the Seas, to the Out-ports here, Letters directed to several Merchants in London, have been heretofore frequently delivered by the bringers thereof to loose and uncertain hands, to be Conveyed forwards, whereas by great Prejudice hath accrued to their Affairs, as well by the miscarrying of many of the said Letters, as often times by the opening of the same, to the discovery of the Correspondence and secrets of the said Merchants.

Be it further Ordained and Enacted by Authority aforesaid, That all Letters and Packets, that by any Master of any Ship or Vessel, or any of his Company, or any Passengers therein, shall be brought to any Port-town of England, or Members thereof, and there delivered to be sent forwards to the City of London, or any other place in any of the Post-Roads from thence towards the said City, (other then such Letters as are before excepted, and may be sent by common known Carriers as aforesaid, or by a friend as aforesaid) shall by such Master, Passenger, or other person be delivered to the Deputy, or Deputies only of the said Officer above Ordained, by him appointed for the

the said Port-towns, and to none other, by him to be sent forward according to the Direction hereof.

And that no person or persons whatsoever, other then such Officer as shall be so nominated and appointed by His Highness the Lord Protector or His Successors, and constituted by Letters Patents under the Great Seal of England as aforesaid, and his Deputies shall presume to set up, or imploy any Foot-Posts, Horse-Posts, or Pacquet-Boates for the common Conveying, Carrying, and Recarrying of any Letters or Pacquets by Land within England, Scotland, and Ireland, or from, or to any the Ports of the same by Sea, or for the Horsing of any Thorough-Post, or persons Riding in Post as aforesaid, upon pain of forfeiting the sum of One thousand pounds for every Moneth that he or they shall so imploy and continue the same, or any of them, the said Forfeiture to be sued for, and recovered by Action of Debt, Plaint, or Information in any of His Highnesses Courts of Record, wherein no Essoign, Priviledge, Protection, or Wager of Law to be admitted, and the said Forfeiture so recovered, to be the one Moiety thereof to His Highness the Lord Protector and His Successors, and the other Moiety to such person or persons who shall or will inform and sue for the same.

And for the better Management of the said Office, and that the people of these Nations may have their intercourse of Commerce and Trade the better maintained, and their Letters and Advises Conveyed, Carried, and Recarried with the greatest Speed, Security, and Convenience that may be,

Be it further Enacted and Ordained by Authority aforesaid, That the said Post-Master General of England, and Comptroller of the Post-Office so Nominated, Appointed, and Constituted as aforesaid, and his Deputies shall from time to time observe and follow such further Order, Rules, Directions, and Instructions, for and concerning the Settlement of convenient Posts and Stages upon the several Roades in England, Scotland and Ireland, and the providing and keeping of a sufficient number of Horses, and Pacquet-Boats, aswell for the Carrying and Conveying of the said Letters and Pacquets, as for the Horsing of all thorow-Posts, and persons Riding in Post, by Warrant or otherwise, as aforesaid, as his said Highness the Lord Protector, and his Successors shall from time to time in that behalf Make and Ordain.

And that his said Highness the Lord Protector and his Successors, may grant the said Office together with the several Rates of Portage above mentioned, and all Profits, Priviledges, Fees, Perquisites, and Emoluments thereunto belonging, or to belong, either for life, or for any term of years, not exceeding Eleven years, to such person or persons, and under such Covenants, Conditions, and yearly Rent to his said Highness and his Successors Resembled, as his said Highness and his Successors

cessors, with Advice of the Council, shall from time to time think fit, for the best Advantage and benefit of the Common-Wealth.

Provided always, and be it Enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That no person shall have Power to take, use, or seize any Horses for the Service mentioned in this Act, without the consent of the Owners, any usage or pretence, or any thing in this Act contained to the contrary hereof notwithstanding.

LONDON:

Printed by Henry Hills and John Field, Printers
to His Highness, 1657.

